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SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 8th MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Friday, 19 February 1993, at 3.35 p.m.

President: Mr. ADOUKI (Congo)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.40 p.m.

ADOPTION OF DECISIONS FROM INFORMAL CONSULTATIONS (DP/1993/L.3, L.6 and L.7)

Draft decision DP/1993/L.3

1. The PRESIDENT drew the Council's attention to draft decision DP/1993/L.3, on recipient country status.

2. Mr. RYSINSKI (Poland), Vice-President, speaking as coordinator of the informal consultations, introduced the draft decision and expressed satisfaction at the fact that Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Georgia, the Slovak Republic, Slovenia and Tajikistan were recipient countries in the United Nations Development Programme.

3. Draft decision DP/1993/L.3 was adopted.

Draft decision DP/1993/L.6

4. Mr. RADE (Netherlands), Vice-President, speaking as coordinator of the informal consultations held the previous day, introduced draft decision DP/1993/L.6.

5. Mr. MONGBE (Benin) said that he did not agree with the translation into French of the word "capacity".

6. Draft decision DP/1993/L.6 was adopted.

7. Mr. SHOJI (Japan) expressed satisfaction at the adoption of the draft decision and appreciation for the initiative by the Administrator in setting up the Capacity 21 programme. It was hoped that UNDP would take the necessary steps so that the execution of the programme could begin as soon as the Governing Council approved the details. Japan, aware of the basic importance of capacity-building in developing countries, would contribute $10 million to Capacity 21, as his Government had already pledged to the Council, in addition to its contribution to the Programme's core budget. Capacity 21 should complement the resources that UNDP received from other sources and should not be a substitute for them; further, that programme should not be viewed separately, but rather as an integral part of the UNDP environment programme. Japan would consider the possibility of providing contributions to those programmes in the future through the core budget.

8. Mr. SHARMA (India) welcomed the pledge made by Japan and expressed the hope that other donors would make similar contributions.

9. Mr. KABIR (Observer for Bangladesh) noted with satisfaction the adoption of draft decision DP/1993/L.6 and hoped that when Capacity 21 was launched, priority would be given to the special needs of the least developed

(Mr. Kabir, Observer, Bangladesh)

countries. During consideration of the question of environment and development, his delegation had reiterated its firm support for that programme and had expressed its concern at the lack of available funds for it. Accordingly, he greatly welcomed the pledge made by Japan. It was hoped that other donors would make similar contributions.

10. Mr. MONGBE (Benin) expressed satisfaction at the sizeable contribution to Capacity 21 pledged by Japan, particularly since it would be in addition to the regular contribution by Japan to the Programme's core resources.

11. Mr. GUILLEN (Peru) and Mr. TANTOT (France) joined the delegations that had expressed appreciation for the special contribution pledged by Japan to Capacity 21.

Draft decision DP/1993/L.7

12. Mr. RADE (Netherlands), Vice-President, speaking as coordinator of the informal consultations held on draft decision DP/1993/L.7, introduced the draft decision on United Nations technical cooperation activities and urged the members of the Council to adopt it by consensus.

13. Draft decision DP/1993/L.7 was adopted.

PROVISIONAL ACTIVITIES OF THE PROGRAMMES UNDERTAKEN IN THE BALTIC STATES AND THE COMMONWEALTH OF INDEPENDENT STATES (DP/1993/5)

14. The PRESIDENT said that he took it that the members of the Council wished to take note of the report of the Administrator on provisional activities of the programmes undertaken in the Baltic States and the Commonwealth of Independent States (DP/1993/5), as well as the comments made by delegations during the consideration of the item.

15. It was so decided.

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE FOR PROGRAMME MATTERS (DP/1993/SCPM/L.1/Add.3)

16. Mr. STELZER (Austria), speaking as Rapporteur of the Standing Committee for Programme Matters, introduced document DP/1993/SCPM/L.1/Add.3, which contained the Standing Committee's recommendations to the Council set forth in a draft decision, whose adoption he strongly recommended.

17. He drew the Council's attention to the following amendments to the draft decision contained in the report by the Standing Committee (DP/1993/SCPM/L.1/Add.3). The phrase "and their possible effect on programme implementation" should be added at the end of paragraph 2. In paragraph 3, the words "Takes note" should be replaced by the word "Approves". Old paragraph 5 became new paragraph 6 and old paragraph 6 became new paragraph 5. New paragraph 6 should read:

(Mr. Stelzer, Austria)

"Decides

"(a) To discuss the general question of project approval on a case-by-case basis at its fortieth session;

"(b) To examine the timetable of the mid-term review at its fortieth session in the light of the views expressed by delegates at the special session."

18. The Standing Committee would consider the question of adopting the report at the fortieth session of the Governing Council, which would leave sufficient time for including the amendments in a revised text and translating it into the official languages.

19. Mr. AMIN-MANSOUR (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that, since the first two paragraphs of document DP/1993/SCPM/L.1/Add.3 began with the word "Approves", paragraph 3 should also begin with that word.

20. Mr. MONGBE (Benin) requested an explanation for the specific reference to the evolution of the political circumstances of Rwanda in paragraph 2 of document DP/1993/SCPM/L.1/Add.3, which seemed highly unusual in such a document.

21. Mr. EDGREN (Associate Administrator) said that it was not the first time that a reference was made to the political circumstances of a country in a draft decision. When the fifth country programme of Malawi had been adopted, a similar phrase had been included in the text of the decision. The intention was to underscore, not the political situation per se, but rather its effect on the country programme.

22. Mr. MONGBE (Benin) said that that reply did not allay his concern. The French version of the document referred to "la situation politique du pays". It would be preferable to speak of the political circumstances of the country, which was the phrase used, according to the Associate Administrator, in adopting the country programme of Malawi.

23. The PRESIDENT said that he agreed with the reply given by the Associate Administrator, since he had been the Chairman of the Standing Committee when the fifth country programme of Malawi had been adopted, and he pointed out that the wording of the English and French texts differed, which might have given rise to the difficulties experienced by the representative of Benin. The English version of the document referred to the "political circumstances of the country", whereas the French text spoke of the "situation politique du pays". The Rapporteur would be able to harmonize the two texts.

24. Mr. MONGBE (Benin) said that it would be preferable for the representatives themselves to try to harmonize the texts so that the definitive version would be to their liking.

25. Mr. YOUSIF (Sudan) said that his delegation viewed with great concern the unnecessary reference to political questions in such decisions.

26. Mr. GRAISSE (Secretary of the Council) said that the French text should read "sur l'évolution des circonstances politiques" or "du l'environnement politique du pays", since "situation politique" was not the same as "political circumstances".

27. The PRESIDENT said that the item under discussion was relatively simple and consisted of finding a way to harmonize the different language versions on the basis of the original English text.

28. Mr. MONGBE (Benin), supported by Mr. ROHNER (Observer for Switzerland), said that, so as not to offend anyone, the correct formula in French would be "ainsi que sur le contexte social et politique et ses incidences sur l'exécution du programme".

29. Mr. GRAISSE (Secretary of the Council) said that the French version could not be too different from the original English version.

30. Mr. AMAZIANE (Observer for Morocco), supported by Mr. MONGBE (Benin), said that the problem was not rooted in the translation; the difficulty arose from the use of the adjective "political" to describe the situation. The Governing Council lacked standing to evaluate the political circumstances of a country. It would be necessary to state: "as well as on the evolution of the general situation in the country and its possible impact on the implementation of the country programme".

31. Mr. GRAISSE (Secretary of the Council) read out the formula used in 1992 for the country programme for Malawi, which referred to the social and political context and its impact on the implementation of the programme.

32. Mr. BARDAD DAIDJ (Algeria) proposed the following wording, which would be faithful to the spirit in which the paragraph in question had been drafted: "as well as on the impact which the evolution of the general context in the country could have on the implementation of the country programme".

33. Mr. AMAZIANE (Observer for Morocco) said that the previous speaker's proposal had improved the text.

34. The PRESIDENT reminded delegations that the Council was in plenary meeting and that, accordingly, oral amendments were provisional. He took it that the Council wished to adopt the recommendations of the Standing Committee which were contained in document DP/1993/SCPM/L.1/Add.3, as orally amended by the Rapporteur and the representative of Algeria.

35. It was so decided.

36. Mr. TANTOT (France), referring to paragraph 2 of document DP/1993/SCPM/L.1/Add.3, said he wished to make it clear that, while political

(Mr. Tantot, France)

questions arose on occasion, the Standing Committee for Programme Matters was basically concerned with economic issues. In considering the country programme for Rwanda, the Standing Committee had been asked to approve a five-year programme containing certain priorities established months earlier, at a time when the situation in the country had been relatively normal, with a view to establishing some development objectives. However, while considering the programme, the Standing Committee had been aware that tragic events were taking place in Rwanda, that a war had broken out which had caused deaths and had led to a situation in which there were millions of displaced people and refugees. In view of that situation, a proposal had been made to defer consideration of the programme until June. The delegation of Rwanda had made very candid statements regarding the political context and, at the express request of that delegation, it had been decided not to postpone the adoption of a decision with regard to the programme. Nevertheless, as it had been in the interest of the Standing Committee to act responsibly, it had been requested, on the proposal of the Director of the Regional Bureau for Africa, that the Standing Committee should revert to the consideration of some elements, including the political situation - hence the formula elaborated in that regard - on the basis of a report which the Administrator had been requested to submit by June 1993.

37. Ms. SCHAFER-PREUSS (Germany) said that she supported the statement made by the representative of France. A spirit of cooperation had prevailed in the Standing Committee, and it was regrettable that delegations which had raised doubts had not been able to participate in the discussions, since that might have given them a better understanding of what had been reflected in the report.

38. Mr. BIZIMANA (Rwanda), after expressing appreciation for the Governing Council's decision to adopt the fifth programme of cooperation between UNDP and Rwanda, reaffirmed the commitment of his country's Government and people to providing full support for the implementation of the programme. A peace process had been unfolding in Rwanda since the previous year. Although a violation of the cease-fire had occurred approximately two weeks earlier, all the necessary steps had been taken to ensure that the cease-fire held, and what had been involved should be regarded as an isolated incident and not a generalized phenomenon.

39. The PRESIDENT said that the amendments would be faithfully reflected in all the languages; he took it that the Council had concluded its consideration of the item.

40. It was so decided.

41. Mr. TANTOT (France) said that the consideration of country programmes had been the major topic of the special session, which had been held to determine the activities of the United Nations programmes to assist the developing countries.

CLOSURE OF THE SESSION

42. Mr. DRAPER (Administrator), noting with satisfaction the great interest which delegations had expressed in country missions and in the presence of some resident representatives, said that 13 new recipient countries had been added in 1992, and that with the approval of recipient status for Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Georgia, the Slovak Republic, Slovenia and Tajikistan, the number of countries and territories receiving UNDP assistance totalled 172.

43. He noted the active participation of all delegations in the discussions concerning institutional arrangements as a follow-up to the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, and expressed special appreciation to the Government of Japan for its generous contribution of $10 million to Capacity 21. With regard to the new temporary offices in the Baltic States and the Commonwealth of Independent States, he had taken note of the discussions and the concerns expressed. In June, discussion of the item could be resumed, and a more detailed and substantive dialogue could take place.

44. The year 1993 would be extremely difficult, not only for UNDP, but for the entire United Nations system. Requests for UNDP assistance were growing at an unprecedented rate, but resources were not increasing proportionally. Of course, in recessionary times resources were scarce, but for that very reason, it was necessary, now more than ever before, to demonstrate the importance of the contribution made by UNDP, to emphasize its function in developing countries and to highlight the crucial role which it played in emergency situations, as in Somalia and Mozambique.

45. After the customary exchange of courtesies, the PRESIDENT declared the special session closed.

The meeting rose at 5.05 p.m.